

ability to provide security, assure political stability and rebuild Iraq's shattered urban centers.

"If you can make Fallujah work, it becomes a status symbol and the whole Arab world will be looking at what they have done for Fallujah," he said.

Sattler and Jeffrey also made it clear that the prospects of reducing and eventually ending the commitment of some 175,000 U.S. and coalition troops in Iraq will be greatly enhanced if Iraqi security forces can be trained and equipped in sufficient numbers.

At the same time, they said, hundreds of millions of dollars must be spent in Fallujah on economic reconstruction by creating jobs and restoring basic services, including water, sanitation facilities and electricity.

"We're at the very beginning stages now," Sattler said. He and about a dozen other senior Marine officers gave Jeffrey an update on the military situation in their region and, in turn, heard Jeffrey describe the political situation and economic reconstruction effort before they met with the local leaders.

The meetings in Fallujah came almost exactly a year after the world was subjected to the ghastly scenes of the charred remains of several American contractors whose bodies were hung from a Fallujah bridge. The scene was the prelude to the bloody battle in November that drove insurgents from their fortified and well-armed base in Fallujah.

Jeffrey is running the U.S. Embassy until the arrival of Zalmay Khalilzad, the current ambassador in Afghanistan whom President Bush nominated Tuesday to replace John Negroponte as ambassador to Iraq. Jeffrey gave the Marines an update on the overall military, political and economic situation in Iraq.

He said coalition forces have made "tremendous progress" toward defeating the insurgent and al Qaeda elements in most areas of Iraq, although the violence directed against coalition forces and Iraqis who are cooperating with the coalition "is still very worrisome."

And he said that 100 50-man units of Iraqi Army and security forces, including local police, are in place, of which about 50 are ready to be deployed nationwide. "That's a huge difference and huge investment," he said, with between \$5 billion and \$6 billion already spent and about an additional \$10 billion committed by the end of this year.

But it's not the money, he said, "it's the mentoring and training that are important."

On the political front, he said the successful outcome of the Jan. 30 elections has provided important momentum, but he expressed concern about the vacuum that exists until the newly elected national assembly and its leaders are chosen.

The problem, he said, is that "the old government is not willing to take action, and the new government doesn't exist yet. We're a bit frustrated, but that's democracy."

Finally, on the economic reconstruction front, Jeffrey said \$100 million has already been spent on Fallujah, with another \$100 million in the pipeline.

"Let's face it: We're winning," he said. "It needs to be said that we are winning. This is a very, very, very difficult thing we're undertaking, but we're winning and we need to continue pouring resources into Fallujah."

Sattler acknowledged the difficulty of finding the right local officials and working with them. "There's dust on everyone here," he said. "So you have to go down until you find somebody without blood on his hands. That's the person you have to deal with."

But one Agency for International Development official said more and more local leaders are willing to cooperate in the rebuilding effort.

"We're beginning to see them at the table now, and they're beginning to ask questions.

We're shifting from one level to another. We're dealing with the Iraqi mind and not the U.S. mind. We're trying to deliver the goods, but it's going to be a long process. It's water running into one more house. It's electricity going into one more house."

Sattler pointed out that more than 2,000 government workers showed up for work in Fallujah the day before and "15,000 people came into town yesterday. There were less than a thousand in December."

A few days later, Sattler repeated his message while hosting Gen. John Abizaid, commander of all U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region, and Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.).

"A year ago, we had an insurgency that operated with impunity inside Fallujah," Sattler said. But now there's a growing partnership between U.S. troops and Iraqi security forces that he said bodes well for the future.

Sattler said, "We get a lot of visitors here, but you haven't visited Iraq if you haven't visited Fallujah."

REGULATION OF 527 ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, earlier today, as a member of the Senate Rules Committee, I participated in a markup of legislation that purports to regulate the so-called 527 organizations. What started out as campaign finance reform legislation in the view of many, both Democrats and Republicans, in this body, unfortunately, turned, through the amendment procedure and the markup, into a very different kind of legislation.

I commend Senator LOTT, chairman of the Rules Committee. He was eminently fair throughout and gave each one of us an opportunity to present our amendments to be fully considered and voted upon. But one amendment that was introduced at the very outset, that was voted favorably upon by all members of the majority caucus as well as I believe one or two Democrats, but not nearly enough to carry the legislation, drastically shifted the bill to one that opens vast new opportunities for political action committees, special interests, to increase their contributions and for Members of Congress, Members of the Senate to direct those moneys to other political campaigns.

Specifically, the amendment that was adopted increased the contributions allowed to political action committees from \$5,000 to \$7,500. That is a 50-percent increase.

The amendment increased the amount of money that political action committees could contribute to national political parties from \$15,000 to \$25,000. That is a 67-percent increase. And it eliminated the restrictions on trade associations soliciting member companies for those contributions without prior approval of those companies as well as limitations on the number of times each year they could be solicited.

Most egregious, the amendment that was adopted allows Members of Congress to transfer unlimited amounts of money from their leadership political action committees to national parties

and to the political committees that are established and maintained by a national political party which includes such enterprises as the Democratic and Republican senatorial campaign committees, congressional campaign committees, and other subdivisions and political committees of the national parties that are used to directly attack Members of Congress for their reelections or to assist challengers or to assist incumbents.

It opened the door widely, broadly, in allowing Members of Congress to use their positions of power and influence to solicit these contributions from special interests on a year-round, round-the-clock basis and then turn those moneys over in unlimited amounts to all of these other political activities.

So at the same time this legislation purported to restrict the ability of individuals to make these kinds of large expenditures on behalf of political causes and candidates, it threw the door wide open for special interest groups to do exactly what they said they were prohibiting. It is a terrible step in the wrong direction. It is evidence, again, of why allowing incumbents to be involved in so-called election law regarding their own self-interest is akin to giving a blowtorch to a pyromaniac. They simply cannot resist the abuses that are available to them.

I urge my colleagues to look at this legislation cautiously as it proceeds to the Senate floor. It is a step in the wrong direction. I regret the action taken today.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT JOHN W. MILLER

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize today the passing of a fellow Iowan who has fallen in service to this country. Sergeant John W. Miller, of the Iowa Army National Guard Company, A, 224th Engineer Battalion, was killed by a sniper on April 12 in Ar Ramadi, Iraq, while providing security for a road-clearing operation. He was 21 years old and is survived by a father, Dennis, two brothers, James and Nathan, and a sister, Jessica, who live in the Burlington, IA area.

John Miller attended West Burlington High School and received his high school diploma from Des Moines Area Community College. He joined the Iowa Army National Guard in March of 2002 and was mobilized to go to Iraq in October of 2004. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device for Mobilization. He was also promoted to sergeant posthumously.

I offer my condolences to John's family and friends. Sergeant Miller's battalion leader wrote that John "will

never be forgotten." I ask all of my colleagues and fellow Americans to join me in fulfilling that promise of remembrance. We must remember John and his comrades who have fallen, their lives, and their sacrifices; for a Nation that forgets her heroes will lose her direction, her strength, and her spirit.

NURSE ANESTHESIA PROGRAM

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, so often we talk about collaboration between the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense. Today, we have a terrific example of such sharing. I specifically want to call attention to an innovative training program for nurse anesthetists. In an attempt to maximize scarce resources, VA and the U.S. Army have pulled together their resources to help prepare VA for fields in anesthesia.

Out of this joint VA/DOD effort has transpired one of the top Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist programs in the country. The program offered at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School at Fort Sam Houston, TX, has been said by its students to provide top of the line Army training in the field of nurse anesthesia. This type of training can be carried over to VA and will promote a seamless transition for those servicemembers that need continued treatment upon return from active duty.

In addition to the clinical training, during the second phase of the program, the students also receive invaluable lessons that simply cannot be taught in just any training facility. By sitting side by side with Army and Air Force classmates, the students are able to gain a greater appreciation and understanding for the different branches of the armed services and the culture of the military. Knowing that they are being cared for by someone who understands their background and by someone who speaks their language, veterans are provided with a level of comfort that can only be beneficial as they receive health care treatment.

This VA/DOD nurse anesthesia training program only provides a glimpse of the strides VA is making and hopefully will continue to make in training and educating current and future health care workers—despite budget constraints. I applaud VA for its leadership to the health care community and for its collaborative efforts to ensure quality health care. As ranking member of the Committee on Veterans Affairs, I will continue to fight for veterans and make sure that they receive the health care that they deserve.

CHINESE TARIFFS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, on April 6, 2005, I voted against a motion to table amendment, No. 309, otherwise known as the Schumer amendment, to the fiscal year 2006–2007 Foreign Affairs authorization bill. Upon careful consideration of this issue I have come to the

conclusion that this amendment will be ineffective at best and harmful at worst. As it is currently written, the Schumer amendment will impose a tariff on all Chinese imports. Sponsors of the amendment claim this measure is necessary in order to compel the Chinese Government to revalue its currency.

I am a supporter of free trade. I also believe that the benefits of free trade must be weighed against any harm that could be done to vital American interests. Understandably, there is considerable angst over the expanding trade deficit between the United States and China. Still, this body should not be hasty to repeat a mistake of the 106th Congress when it acted to support a similar amendment to the 2000 China trade bill.

Similar to what the Schumer amendment proposes, provisions in the China trade bill allowed the Federal Government to impose a de facto tariff in the form of dumping penalties against foreign companies. The collected penalties were distributed to the companies that filed complaints in the U.S. It should be noted that the WTO defines "dumping" as a situation where goods are sold below price normally charged in home market. By contrast, and to the consternation of our trade partners, domestic American companies have thought of dumping as goods being sold below price normally charged in the U.S. market. Over the past 4½ years since the bill was enacted, American companies have collected over \$1 billion in penalties from suits filed in the United States.

While that might not seem like such a bad thing, other governments have been busy filing complaints with the World Trade Organization. They are now determined to impose 15 percent tariffs against American exporters as punishment for the American "dumping" penalties. The costs of these tariffs will be borne by all sorts of American manufacturers and exporters. These tariffs will also punish American workers by making their work products uncompetitive in the global market.

I raise this parallel because it reveals to us the dangers of not seeking resolution through an agreed-to and effective framework provided by the WTO. The strength of the American economy has always been based on the openness of our markets. Unilaterally imposing tariffs on Chinese imports will act as an unfair tax on American exporters and that is a price we cannot afford to pay.

FREEDOM TO TRAVEL TO CUBA ACT OF 2005

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, on Monday, April 25, I introduced a bill, S. 894, with Senator DORGAN that will make a small change in Cuba policy. It deals only with travel provisions to Cuba.

I have been watching Cuba since the 1960s. I went to college at George Wash-

ington University and was there at the time of the Cuban missile crisis. I have had the opportunity to watch what has happened with Cuba through the years and I am reminded of something my dad used to say: If you keep on doing what you have always been doing, you are going to wind up getting what you already got.

That is kind of been the situation with Cuba. We have been trying the same thing for 40 years—over 40 years—and it has not worked. So I am suggesting a change to get a few more people in there to increase conversation for people that understand the way the United States works and the way Cuba works and how they ought to drift more rapidly towards where we are.

Castro's cruelty to his own people has tempted us to tighten the already strong restrictions on the relations between our two countries, and we did. We need to be successful in bringing about a better way of life for the Cuban people.

When we stop Cuban-Americans from bringing financial assistance to their families in Cuba, and end the people to people exchanges, and stop the sale of agricultural and medicinal products to Cuba, we are not hurting the Cuban Government, we are hurting the Cuban people. We are diminishing their faith and trust in the United States and reducing the strength of the ties that bind the people of our two countries.

If we allow more and freer travel to Cuba, if we increase trade and dialogue, we take away Castro's ability to blame the hardships of the Cuban people on the United States. In a very real sense, the better we try to make things for the Cuban people, the more we will reduce the level and the tone of the rhetoric used against us by Fidel Castro.

As I mentioned before, it seems foolish to do the same thing over and over again and expect different results. That is what we are doing in Cuba. We are continuing to exert pressure from our side and, as we do, we are giving Castro a scapegoat to blame for the poor living conditions in his country in the process. It is time for a different policy, one that goes further than embargoes and replaces a restrictive and confusing travel policy with a new one that will more effectively help us to achieve our goals in that country.

The Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act is very straightforward. It states that the President shall not prohibit, either directly or indirectly, travel to or from Cuba by United States citizens or transactions incident to such travel.

In 1958 the Supreme Court affirmed our constitutional right to travel, but the U.S. Government then prohibited Americans from spending money in Cuba. We simply said, OK, you have a right to travel, but try traveling without spending a dime.

One of the reasons I became involved in this issue is because a Cuban-American from Jackson, WY, had been in Cuba visiting his family, doing his one